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2011-2012**

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Brian Pepper, Chippewa
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**Fight Crime: Invest in Kids National
Leadership Council**

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Gary Walker, Marquette County
Prosecutor

Executive Staff

Kathy "K.P." Pelleran, State Director
Donna Aberlich, Deputy Director

FIGHT CRIME: Invest in Kids Michigan

May 22, 2012

Honorable Kenneth Kurtz, Chairman
House Committee on Families, Children, & Seniors
State Capitol
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Chairman Kurtz,

As the primary reporters of child abuse and neglect, the men and women in law enforcement know all too well its damaging consequences for children, families, and our communities. It is important that we address it both effectively and efficiently, with proven strategies like voluntary, early childhood home visiting programs. That is why we are supporting HB 5572, which ensures that the state's investment in home visiting supports program models and providers that have a record of success.

In 2010, there were nearly 700,000 confirmed victims of abuse and neglect nationwide, including 1,560 children who were killed as a result. That same year in Michigan, there were 32,412 children who were confirmed victims of abuse or neglect, and 71 died from abuse or neglect. The true number of children abused or neglected is likely significantly higher, since many incidents are never reported. Nationally, almost 80 percent of children who died from maltreatment in 2010 were under age 3 and nearly half never reached their first birthday.

The more than 500 law enforcement leaders and crime survivors of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS *Michigan* know from the front lines that child abuse and neglect also increase future crime. Survivors of abuse or neglect often carry emotional scars for life, and research has shown they are almost 30 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime. The cycle of abuse can also continue, with evidence suggesting that an estimated one third of adults with a history of abuse may harm their own children.

Voluntary, evidence-based home visiting programs can help break the cycle of abuse and violence. Eligible families can receive these services to learn more about their children's health, and nutrition, and their physical, psychological, and emotional development. Data from several effective home visiting models underscore the power of this strategy to prevent abuse, neglect and trouble with the law. Mothers served by Healthy Families America reported engaging in physical abuse of their children less frequently than mothers not receiving the model's services. A rigorous study of the Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) found that participation in the program cut abuse and neglect among at-risk kids nearly in half. By age 15, children whose mothers received NFP coaching had 60 percent fewer arrests than children of similar mothers who were not coached.

POLICE CHIEFS, SHERIFFS, PROSECUTORS, OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS, AND VIOLENCE SURVIVORS PREVENTING CRIME AND VIOLENCE

The research clearly shows that such reductions in child abuse and neglect and later crime, as well as resulting cost-savings, can be achieved only through **effective** home visiting programs. HB 5572 will improve the quality and results of home visiting in Michigan by focusing public dollars on programs that have been proven effective or promising. Not only is there no additional cost associated with the legislation; HB 5572 will align Michigan's home visiting infrastructure with nationally recognized best practices. For these reasons, the Michigan police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, and crime survivors of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS urge you to pass this important legislation.

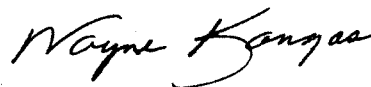
Sincerely,



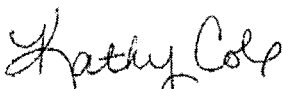
Brian Mackie, Washtenaw
Cty. Prosecutor
Co-Chair, FIGHT CRIME:
INVEST IN KIDS *Michigan*



Dwain Dennis
Ionia Cty. Sheriff
Executive Board Member
FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN
KIDS *Michigan*



Wayne Kangas, Clinton
Cty. Sheriff
Co-Chair, FIGHT CRIME:
INVEST IN KIDS *Michigan*



Kathy Cole, Crime Survivor
Co-Chair, FIGHT CRIME:
INVEST IN KIDS *Michigan*



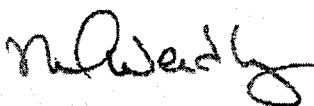
Brian A. Peppler
Chippewa Cty. Prosecutor



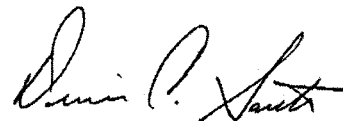
Michael S. Martin
Director, Little River Band
Public Safety Dept.



Leland Teschendorf
Tuscola Cty. Sheriff



Mike Wendling
St. Clair Cty. Prosecutor



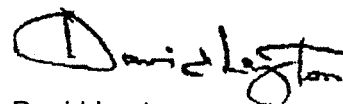
Dennis Santo
Grandville Police Chief



Greg Patchin
Gerrish Twp. Sergeant



Jerry Nielsen
Midland Cty. Sheriff



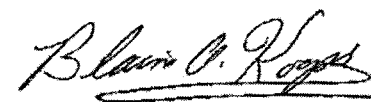
David Leyton
Genesee Cty. Prosecutor



Matthew Wiese
Marquette Cty. Prosecutor




Bob Bauer
Portland Police Chief



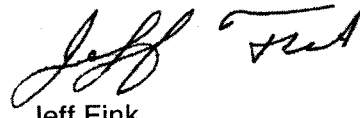
Blaine A. Koops
Allegan Cty. Sheriff



Matt Messer
Holland Public Safety Chief



Gary A. Ballweg
Delta Cty. Sheriff



Jeff Fink
Kalamazoo Cty. Prosecutor



Paul R. Spaniola
Mason Cty. Prosecutor



Steven Fairman
Huntington Woods Director
Of Public Safety



Pete Wallin
Emmet Cty. Sheriff



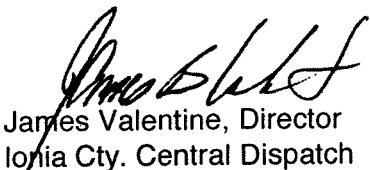
Robert Stevenson, Exec.
Director, MI Assn. of
Chiefs of Police



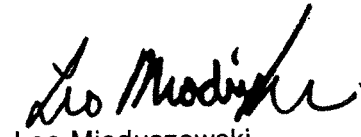
Matthew E. Harshberger
Pittsfield Twp. DPS Director



Michael Reese
Sterling Hts. Police Chief



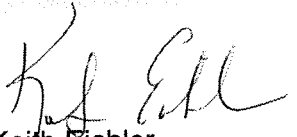
James Valentine, Director
Ionia Cty. Central Dispatch



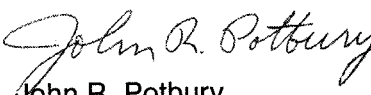
Leo Mioduszewski
Isabella Cty. Sheriff



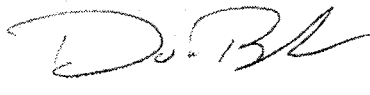
Everette E. Ayers III
Crawford Cty. Prosecutor



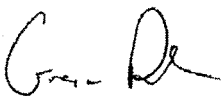
Keith Eichler
Branch County Undersheriff



John R. Potbury
Genesee Cty. Special
Assistant. Prosecutor



David Bachman
Manistee Police Chief



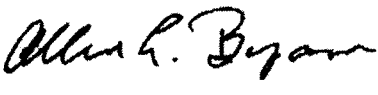
Greg Paduch
Romeo Police Chief



Gene L. Wriggelsworth
Ingham Cty. Sheriff



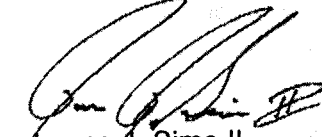
Ed Edwardson
Wyoming Police Chief (ret.)



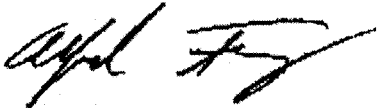
Allen L. Byam
Calhoun Cty. Sheriff



Martin J. Underhill
Grand Ledge Police Chief



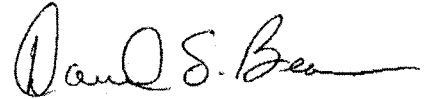
James J. Sims II
Osceola Cty. Prosecutor



Alfred Feleppa
Mackinac Cty. Prosecutor



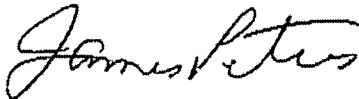
Lisa Clockman
Grandville Police Officer



Daniel Bean
Antrim Cty. Sheriff



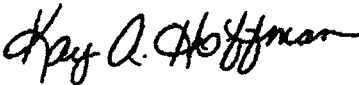
David R. Schnurstein
Grand Rapids Police
Lieutenant



James Petres
Mundy Twp. Police
Chief/Fire Marshall



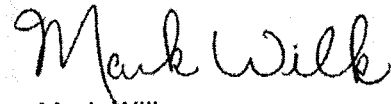
Sam L. Davis
Ingham Cty. Sheriffs Dept.
Jail Administrator



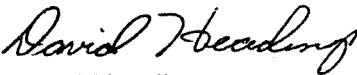
Kay A. Hoffman
Lansing Twp. Police Chief



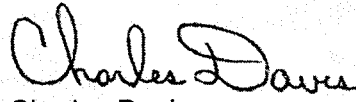
Gordon Schick
Pittsfield Twp. Deputy
Police Chief



Mark Wilk
St. Ignace Police Chief



David Headings
Battle Creek Police
Chief (ret.)



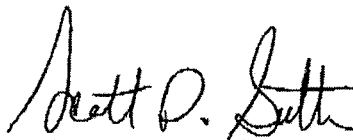
Charles Davis
Reed City Police Chief



Mike Lauretti
Eastpointe Police Chief



Rev. Ralph A. Rebandt
Farmington Hills Police
Chaplain



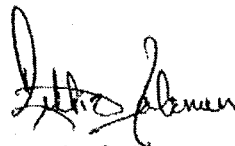
Scott D. Sutter
Linden Police Chief



Michael Main
Shepherd Police Chief



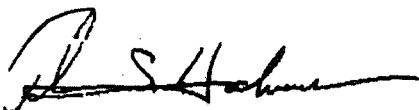
Kevin Kratz
Buena Vista Twp. Interim
Police Chief



Rich L. Coleman
Pittsfield Twp. DPS Comm.



Steven Kieliszewski
Alpena Cty. Sheriff




Dennis S. Halverson
Charlevoix-Emmet ISD
Safe Schools Coordinator



Dean Roesler
Muskegon Cty. Sheriff

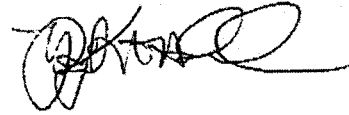


David DeForest
Little River Band Tribal
Police Lieutenant

 Kyle Erksine

Milton L. Scales
MDEQ Criminal
Investigations Chief (ret.)

Kyle Erksine
Pittsfield Twp. DPS Officer



Byron Konschuh
Lapeer Cty. Prosecutor



From America's Front Line Against Crime: Proven investments in kids will prevent crime and violence

As an organization of more than 5,000 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, attorneys general, other law enforcement leaders, and violence survivors, we are committed to putting dangerous criminals behind bars. But by the time law enforcement get involved, the damage is already done and lives are changed forever.

America's anti-crime arsenal contains no weapons more powerful than the effective programs that help kids get the right start in life. A number of high-quality programs are proven to prevent crime, reduce child abuse and neglect, and help troubled kids get back on track. Yet, despite decades of growing research proving what works, inadequate investments leave millions of children needlessly at risk of becoming delinquent teens and violent adults while putting every American at greater risk of becoming a victim of crime.

We call on all federal, state and local officials to implement this four-part plan to cut crime and violence. Doing so will help America's children learn the values and skills they'll need to become good neighbors and responsible adults. Across all ages there are effective programs. Some start before birth, others

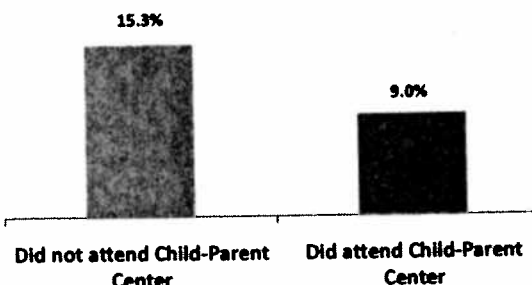
are proven to work with older kids, even serious juvenile offenders. While no plan can prevent every violent act, this common-sense approach, based on our experience and the latest research about what really works, can make all of us safer.

Four Steps that Work

1. Provide all families access to high-quality early care and education for kids from birth to age five.
2. Offer voluntary parent coaching to at-risk parents of young children through home visiting or other options proven to prevent child abuse and neglect.
3. Ensure all school-age children and youth have access to effective programs during school hours and after school to help keep them on track.
4. Identify troubled and delinquent kids and provide them and their parents effective interventions so the children will avoid a life of crime.

70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18

An arrest for violence by age 18



Source: Reynolds 2001

1. Provide all families access to high-quality early care and education for kids from birth to age five

Law enforcement leaders have long known that giving kids the right start in life is the best way to prevent violence and crime. Rigorous social science and neuroscience research now backs that up. In the first few years of life, children's intellects and emotions, and even their ability to develop concern for others (the beginnings of conscience), are building the foundation upon which their later success or failure will greatly depend. As parents are at work trying to make ends meet, voluntary early education and care for babies, toddlers and preschoolers can begin preparing kids for a successful life rather than a life of repeated contacts with law enforcement. For example:

- Chicago's publicly funded Child-Parent Centers have served almost 100,000 three- and four-year-olds since 1967. For 14 years, researchers tracked 989 of those children and 550 similar children not in the program. The children who did not participate were 70 percent more likely to be arrested for a violent crime by age 18.
- In Ypsilanti, Michigan, three- and four-year-olds from low-income families who did not participate in the Perry Preschool program were five times more likely to be chronic lawbreakers by age 27 than those who were randomly assigned to the program. The children in the preschool program were 44 percent more likely to graduate from high school.

2. Offer voluntary parent coaching to at-risk parents of young children through home visiting or other options proven to prevent child abuse and neglect

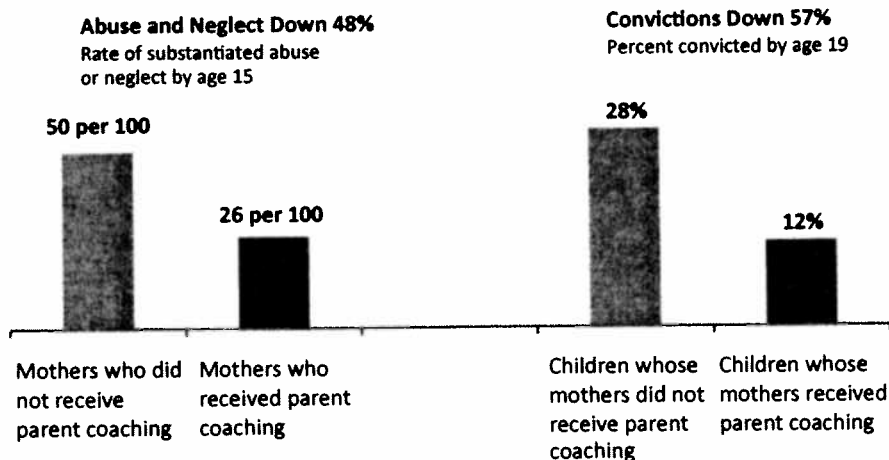
Almost 800,000 children are abused or neglected in this country each year. Studies show that being abused or neglected multiplies the risk that a child will grow up to be a violent criminal. Public safety demands that we offer at-risk parents home visiting and parent support programs that prevent children from being abused and neglected, prevent subsequent delinquency, and improve other outcomes for children. Research shows what works:

- The Nurse-Family Partnership randomly assigned half of a group of at-risk families to voluntary visits by specially trained nurses who offered coaching in parenting skills and other advice and support. Beginning during the mother's pregnancy and continuing until the child's second birthday, parents learned to manage stress, understand the health and nutrition needs of newborns, identify the signs of problems, make their home safe, and find resources such as doctors and child care help. Rigorous studies showed that the children served by the program were half as likely to be abused and neglected, and by age 19 they were half as likely to have been convicted of a crime.
- Chicago's Child-Parent Centers preschool program for three- and four-year olds from low-income neighborhoods, already cited above, included a strong parent coaching component with staffed parent-resource

rooms in the centers. Children in the program were half as likely to experience repeated abuse or neglect and nearly half as likely to be placed in foster care as the similar children *not* in the program.

- Triple P, the Positive Parenting Program, is a system for delivering age-appropriate tools and techniques for parents to help their children behave responsibly. It lets parents pick what help they want, ranging from newsletter articles, to brief consultations, to ten weeks of parent coaching for parents with especially challenging children. The Triple P system was tested

The Nurse-Family Partnership Cut Abuse and Neglect and Convictions for Crimes in Half Among the At-risk Kids Served

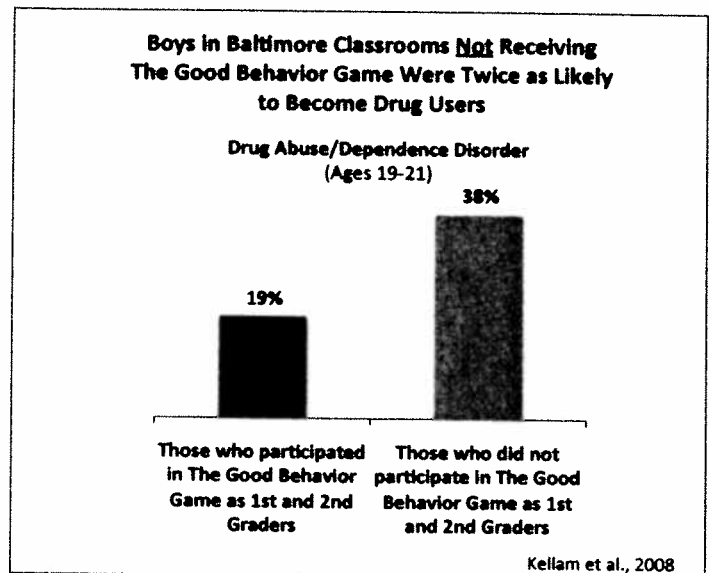


in counties throughout South Carolina with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. For the thousands of children served in the counties randomly assigned to receive the efforts compared to the counties left out, Triple P counties averaged 25 percent reductions in abuse and neglect, 33 percent reductions in foster care placements, and 35 percent reductions in emergency room visits or hospitalizations for abuse.

3. Ensure all school-age children and youth have access to effective programs during school hours and after school to help keep them on track

Two approaches are needed to help school-aged kids steer clear of crime: 1) effective programs during the school day, and 2) high-quality after-school programs.

- The Good Behavior Game is an example of a simple, effective school-based program for all kids. In the game, kids are divided into two teams that compete to behave well and follow class rules. The winning team receives simple rewards, such as lining up first for recess. In the process, the students acquire life-long lessons on how to effectively manage their own behaviors. In one trial, first graders were randomly assigned to participate or not in the game. By the sixth grade, non-participants were more than twice as likely as participants to suffer from clinical levels of conduct disorder – a mental health diagnosis associated with out-of-control behavior and delinquency. In another randomized trial, by the time the male non-participants were age 19 through 21, they were twice as likely to suffer from a drug abuse/dependence disorder.
- Studies have found that 40 percent of school bullies had three or more criminal convictions as adults, and bullies are more likely to carry a weapon to school. Rigorously tested anti-bullying programs that enlist the whole school – everyone from bus drivers to principals – have cut bullying by as much as half.
- On school days, the after-school hours are the prime time for juvenile crime. Developing ways to attract at-risk middle- and high-school age children into after-school programs, and to effectively coach them on how to avoid troubling behaviors, can be challenging, but the Boys & Girls Clubs have shown they can deliver. For example, in a study conducted in several U.S. cities, five housing projects without Boys & Girls Clubs were compared to five projects receiving new clubs. At the beginning, drug activity and vandalism were the same. But by the time the



study ended, the projects without the programs had 50 percent more vandalism and scored 37 percent worse on a combined measure of drug activity.

4. Identify troubled and delinquent kids and provide them and their parents effective interventions so the children will avoid a life of crime

Many children who are overly aggressive and at higher risk of becoming involved in violent crime later in life can be identified at an early age and helped:

- The Incredible Years provides training in problem solving and social issues for families of young children suffering from aggressive behavior problems. The researchers studying this program report that it has been able to stop the cycle of aggression for approximately two-thirds of the families served.
- Many youths who are already offenders can become productive citizens with the right help:
- A few intensive family therapy programs, such as the Multisystemic Therapy or Functional Family Therapy, provide well-tested strategies to the parents or foster parents of serious juvenile offenders and work with the young offenders themselves to reduce kids' problem behaviors. Research shows that new arrests of youths in these programs have been cut by as much as half compared to similar troubled youths in families not receiving this help.

"We need to step up and invest in what works to keep America's most vulnerable children from becoming America's most-wanted adults."

– Sheriff Leroy Baca,
Los Angeles County, CA
Board Chairman,
FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

The bottom line: investing in kids saves lives and money

When our country fails to invest effectively in its children, all Americans pay the price – in taxes for criminal justice costs, costs to business, and costs to the victims. Worse, some children and adults will pay with their lives. Investing now in what works not only saves lives and protects Americans, it saves money:

- Researcher Mark Cohen found that the average value of preventing a baby from growing up to become a youth who drops out of school, uses drugs and goes on to become a career criminal is at least \$2.5 million per individual.
- Economist Steven Barnett found that the Perry Preschool program produced a net savings of \$16 for every dollar invested. Total savings averaged \$245,000 per child and more than two-thirds of the savings came from reduced crime costs.
- The Washington State Institute for Public Policy concluded that the Nurse-Family Partnership produced over \$20,000

in crime savings per family served; and, for troubled youth already in the juvenile justice system, three effective family therapy programs cut future crimes so much their average savings ranged from \$18,000 to \$89,000 per child. States have immediately cut the costs of housing juvenile delinquents by shifting eligible youth from expensive facilities to those more effective family therapy programs.

Law enforcement is united in calling for crime-prevention investments in kids

Who says these four steps are among our most powerful weapons to fight crime?

- The more than 5,000 law enforcement leaders and crime survivors who are members of FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS.
- Major law enforcement and crime survivor organizations who have endorsed our call to fight crime by investing in kids: The International Association of Chiefs of Police, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National District Attorneys Association, the National Association of Attorneys General, the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Organization for Victim Assistance, and dozens of other national and state law enforcement organizations across America.

The prestigious National Academy of Sciences has further confirmed that the research on what works to keep kids out of trouble is solid.

Helping kids get the right start in life will save money, build a stronger America, and protect our communities. It is time to invest in what works.

For an electronic version of this brief with endnotes, see:

<http://www.fightcrime.org/page/fcik-plan-reduce-crime-and-violence-with-endnotes>

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10/2010

1212 New York Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20005
Tel 202.776.0027
Fax 202.776.0110

www.fightcrime.org

